

Asheville City Council
Planning and Economic Development Committee

2:00 p.m., April 8, 2009
Economic Development Office Conference Room

Minutes

Present: Councilwoman Robin Cape, Chair; Vice-Mayor Jan Davis; Councilman Bill Russell

Staff: Gary Jackson, Sam Powers, Sasha Vrtunski, Cathy Ball, Shannon Tuch, Judy Daniel, Julia Cogburn, Blake Esselstyn, James Lee

The Planning and Economic Development Committee met on April 8, 2009, at 29 Haywood Street. Chair Cape called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Sam Powers, Economic Development Director, introduced James Lee, to the Committee. Mr. Lee has accepted a one-year assignment as the Minority Business Program Coordinator trainee; Brenda Mills has moved to the City Manager's Office for the year as the ARRA Project Manager.

1. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes from the March 11, 2009, meeting were approved as written.

2. Updates

Downtown Master Plan

Sasha Vrtunski, Project Manager, gave the update. The final Draft Downtown Master Plan is available, and has been presented to both the Planning & Zoning Committee, and the Downtown Commission. Both groups voted unanimously to support the plan, with comments attached. Ms. Vrtunski reported that the process moving forward would include an Advisory Committee meeting on April 9, Goody Clancy consultants meeting with Council on May 12 to present the plan, and a public hearing on May 26. On May 12, Council will also receive an implementation matrix.

RFP

Sam Powers, Economic Development Director, gave the update.

Eagle Market Street: The City legal staff worked with the Eagle Market Development Corporation, finalizing an exclusive Negotiations Rights Agreement (ENRA) last Friday, April 3. Economic conditions continue to affect plans for development.

Aston Gateway: MHO is concentrating on the Ralph/Choctaw phase (Town Branch greenway implementation) as a prelude to the Aston Gateway.

Haywood Street: The City continues to work on the draft development agreement; and, once completed, will present it to the McKibbon Hotel Group. Mechanics of the draft include conditions for the sale; these would be any covenants and conditions that the City want to incorporate. Multiple meetings have been held with both McKibbon and the Basilica on the City's invitation to partner on the development of the public space on land owned by the Basilica. The City is in the process of updating the appraisal, as the fair market value can be affected by the conditions put on the sale.

Councilman Davis asked if progress had been made working with AT&T for public parking opportunities; Mr. Powers indicated that, yes, progress had been made, although the process will be fairly complicated.

A motion was made by Councilman Russell that the issue be presented to Council in the form of a development agreement. Mr. Oast, City Attorney, indicated that the draft development should be ready in the next week. The motion was seconded by Councilman Davis, and passed unanimously.

51 Biltmore: The project is within 66% of completion of the final design. It should be put out to bid by June 1. McKibbon has committed to have a written affidavit of finances by then. The bids will be due July 10.

Asheland/Old Asheland: In the RFP Phase 1, two sites on Asheland/Old Asheland were discussed. At that time, Council made the decision not to pursue them. There may be some interest in looking at these sites again. Both properties were obtained with community developments funds, so the funds would go to CDBG.

Councilman Russell made a motion to take to Council a recommendation to resurrect the sale of the properties on Asheland and Old Asheland. Councilman Davis seconded the motion; it passed unanimously.

3. New Business

Draft RFP for Preliminary Engineering for DOT Funding

Cathy Ball, Engineering Director, and Dan Baechtold, Transportation Planning Manager, gave the report. Federal funds of \$600,000 have been identified to do preliminary engineering work for funding of the Wilma Dykeman plan. The scope of work is not well defined, except to do preliminary work. The question is how to best use the money. Although the money has to be used for pre-engineering, it will also have to have an environmental impact statement.

The concept for the Wilma Dykeman plan is 14 miles of mostly State roads. The State is interested in developing the east-west corridor (Amboy and Meadow Roads), while the City plans to focus on the north-south corridor.

Council has already approved a reimbursement agreement with DOT, who is waiting for a notice to proceed.

The committee expressed its enthusiasm for moving forward with the preliminary engineering, because of the exciting possibilities inherent in the Wilma Dykeman Plan for the community.

Woodfin Annexation

Julia Cogburn, Planner II, and Blake Esselstyn, Planner II, gave the report. The Committee directed staff to enter into conversations with the Woodfin delegation to explore alternative strategies to annexation presented in the attached memorandum.

Airport Land Use & Zoning

Shannon Tuch, Assistant Director of Planning, gave the report. Proposed zoning for the newly annexed Airport Road properties has been approved by the Planning & Zoning Committee. The recommended zoning allows for predetermined zoning, which then streamlines the review process. It is on the April 28th Council agenda.

3. Status Reports

4. Presentations

5. Public Comment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.